AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace, without prejudice, all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Previously Presented) A speed controller for a motor vehicle, comprising:

an input device configured to receive input of a desired speed by a driver, wherein a plurality of operating modes differing in functional scope are provided by the speed controller, which operating modes are configured to be activated in different speed ranges, each operating mode having a corresponding number of speed-regulating functions; and

a decision unit configured to determine, using predefined criteria, whether a change in the desired speed input by the driver is to be interpreted as a command for changing the current operating mode;

wherein a first of the plurality of operating modes is an operating mode for a first predetermined vehicle speed range that is configured to be activated only above a limiting speed V_s, and a second of the plurality of operating modes is configured for a second predetermined vehicle speed range, wherein a lower limit of the first predetermined vehicle speed range is equal to the limiting speed V_s, and wherein a lower limit of the second predetermined vehicle speed range is lower than the limiting speed V_s, and wherein an upper limit of the second predetermined vehicle speed range is greater than the limiting speed V_s and lower than an upper limit of the first predetermined vehicle speed range, and wherein the first predetermined vehicle speed range and the second predetermined vehicle speed range at least partially overlap, and wherein the second operating mode provides in certain instances an automatic braking of the vehicle to a standstill, and wherein the first operating mode does not provide the automatic braking of the vehicle to a standstill;

wherein the decision unit is configured to automatically cause, when the speed of the vehicle decreases to below the limiting speed V_s, a change from the first operating mode into second operating mode, and then automatically limit the desired speed to a value permitted in the second operating mode;

wherein the decision unit is configured to cause a change from the second operating mode into the first operating mode only if the driver provides to the input device an input of a desired speed greater than the upper limit of the second predetermined vehicle speed range;

wherein when, in the second operating mode, the driver does not input a new desired speed to the input device and the driver increases the speed of the vehicle by operating a gas pedal of the motor vehicle to exceed a threshold speed equal to the limiting speed plus a

predetermined positive value, the decision unit is configured to deactivate the speed controller.

2. (Original) The speed controller of claim 1, further comprising:
a display device adapted to display the current operating mode.

3. (Original) The speed controller of claim 1, further comprising:
a signal device to signal to the driver a change in the current operating mode.

4. (Canceled).

5. (Canceled).

6. (Previously Presented) The speed controller of claim 1, wherein the decision unit automatically causes a change from the first operating mode into the second operating mode when the desired speed is lower than the limiting speed V_s and when the actual speed of the vehicle is less than the upper limit of the second predetermined vehicle speed range, the upper limit being equal to $V_s + h_1$, where h_1 has a non-negative value.

7. (Previously Presented) The speed controller of claim 1, wherein the decision unit automatically causes the change from the first operating mode into the second operating mode when one of the following occurs:

a) the desired speed is increased to a threshold value which is at least equal to the limiting speed; and

b) the actual speed of the vehicle does not increase to the limiting speed within a predefined time interval.

8. (Canceled).

9. (Currently Amended) The speed controller of claim 1, wherein the decision unit deactivates the speed controller when, in the second operating mode, the desired speed is less than or equal to the limiting speed V_s and the actual speed of the vehicle is greater than a threshold value $V_s + h_2$, where h_2 has a non-negative value.

10. (Canceled).

11. (Previously Presented) The speed controller of claim 1, wherein the decision unit activates the speed controller in the first operating mode when, upon the input of the desired speed, the actual speed of the vehicle is greater than the limiting speed and the decision unit

activates the speed controller in the second operating mode and limits the desired speed when, upon the input of the desired speed, the actual speed of the vehicle is less than or equal to the limiting speed.

12. (Original) The speed controller of claim 11, wherein the decision unit activates the speed controller in the second operating mode only when a target object is located by a distance sensor system and the distance from the vehicle to this target object lies within a predefined range.

13. (Previously Presented) The speed controller of claim 12, wherein the decision unit automatically deactivates the speed controller in the second operating mode when the target object is lost by the distance sensor system and is not re-detected within a predefined time span.

14. (Original) The speed controller of claim 12, wherein the decision unit automatically deactivates the speed controller in the second operating mode when the distance between the vehicle and the target object becomes greater than a predefined value.